

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency

California Department of Public Health
California Department of Health Care Services

February 15, 2008

Dear Colleague:

In 2002, the California State Legislature passed Assembly Concurrent Resolution 174 which established May as Women's Health Month in California. Each year since 2002, the California Office of Women's Health (OWH) has sponsored Women's Health Month statewide.

The theme for Women's Health Month in 2008 is the **"Power of WE – Many Voices, One Vision"**. Women from many different backgrounds gain strength through shared efforts to improve the lives of women in California. The purpose of Women's Health Month 2008 is threefold:

- To increase public awareness of significant women's health issues
- To educate and empower women to act as their own health advocates
- To promote and improve the health and wellbeing of women in California

We invite you to join us in meeting these goals by conducting at least one Women's Health Month event or activity during the month of May in 2008. Events can spotlight a specific women's health issue or address women's health more generally. Activities that have been conducted by participating organizations in past years include:

- Women's Health Fair
- Mobile mammography screening in underserved neighborhoods
- Free blood pressure and cholesterol screening for older women at community clinics
- Community lecture series or event with inspirational speaker's focusing on women's health issues
- Campus teach-in about overcoming barriers or issues related to sexually transmitted diseases or violence prevention
- Low-fat recipe cook-off for women's heart health
- Lobby or window display on women's health issues
- Community violence prevention forum
- Young women's health conference
- Newspaper, TV or radio story on women's health
- Award of recognition to a community program that is positively impacting women's health

Women's Health Month activities need not be costly or complicated. We encourage you to involve your local community partners in planning and conducting these events. These partners include community-based organizations, schools, health departments,

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health care providers, local women's professional or business associations and civic clubs which value the opportunity to support women's health.

Organizations (public or private) that plan to conduct a women's health event or awareness activity are eligible to receive FREE 2008 California Women's Health Month materials which include posters, bookmarks and notepads. These materials are creatively designed and incorporate original artwork by Jane Evershed, a gifted artist whose socially conscious work addresses women's issues from a culturally diverse perspective. In order to receive free Women's Health Month materials, you must submit a completed Women's Health Month Participation Form to the Office of Women's Health by April 4th. You will receive your Women's Health Month materials by April 25th.

The Office of Women's Health will be posting information on its' website highlighting various Women's Health Month events and activities that are planned statewide. Please include information about your planned events and activities on your Women's Health Month Participation Form so that we can post it on our OWH website. Additional copies of the form can be downloaded from the OWH website: www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/OWH or www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/OWH

This May, thousands of women across the country will embark on an eight-week physical activity challenge for better health as part of WOMAN Challenge. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health is coordinating the WOMAN Challenge to kick off the ninth annual National Women's Health Week (May 11-17, 2008). This free eight week challenge encourages women and girls to walk 10,000 steps or get 30 minutes of moderate exercise every day. The WOMAN Challenge begins on Mother's Day, May 11, and ends on July 5, 2008. We encourage you to incorporate this event into your California Women's Health Month schedule of events. To learn more, please visit the National Women's Health Information Center at www.womenshealth.gov/woman

California Women's Health Month is an exciting opportunity for all of us to work together to raise awareness about women's health issues in California. We look forward to your participation. If you need additional information or assistance, please contact Marilyn Schuyler, MPH at (916) 440-7632 or Marilyn.Schuyler@dhcs.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Terri Thorfinnson, Chief
California Office of Women's Health

Enclosure